

STATINTL

## Former CIA Director Admits Mistakes in Past

**M**INNEAPOLIS (RNS)—Former Central Intelligence Agency director William E. Colby told an audience at Westminster Presbyterian Church here that the agency he headed has made several mistakes, but he defended the CIA's occasional efforts to overthrow foreign governments.

Colby, a Roman Catholic layman, was CIA director from May 1973 until January 1976. During his tenure, the CIA was often criticized for its alleged use of personnel employed by religious organizations in collecting political and military data in foreign countries. Such people were also accused of helping distribute CIA funds for covert activities.

Examples of mistakes cited by Colby were the unsuccessful 1961 invasion of Cuba known as the Bay of Pigs fiasco and "the series of perfectly stupid operations trying to bring about the demise of Fidel Castro" which included seeking to kill the Cuban leader with an explod-

ing cigar and enlisting the aid of the Mafia.

Colby stressed that the CIA is never above the law. "It operates under our Constitutional guarantees," he said.

Yet, the former director pointed out that the CIA's task is to "provide the information, intelligence we need to protect our country." As such, he said it would be a mistake to deprive the U.S. of the use of covert action "in response to a foreign problem and leave us with nothing between a diplomatic protest and sending in the Marines."

Colby suggested many of the Reagan administration's recent problems would have been averted if the CIA had been in charge of some assignments attempted by the National Security Council. "If you're going to run a clandestine, delicate operation, you better use the pros."